

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present paper, the application includes claims 1-18, of which claim 1 is independent.

Response to Office Action

The above-identified Office Action has been reviewed, the references carefully considered, and the Examiner's comments carefully weighed. In view thereof, the present paper is submitted. It is contended that by the present request for reconsideration, all bases of objection and/or rejection set forth in the Office Action have been traversed and overcome. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – Non-Statutory Obviousness-Type Double Patenting

In Item 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-18 as being unpatentable over claims 1-18 of US Patent No. 7,146,962. The Examiner contends that although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they have the same structure and scope.

Applicant's Response

After careful consideration, the applicant has followed the Examiner's suggestion and has concurrently filed a terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c). Applicant respectfully points out that the cited patent (US 7,146,962) is commonly owned with the present application by Honda Motor Co., Ltd.

Based on the foregoing, applicant respectfully believes that the rejections of claims 1-18 are overcome, and it is respectfully requested that such rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

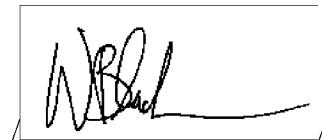
Conclusion

Based on all of the foregoing, applicant respectfully submits that all of the objections and rejections set forth in the Office Action are overcome, and that as presently amended, all of the pending claims are believed to be allowable over all of the references of record, whether considered singly or in combination. Applicant therefore requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections and objections of record, and allowance of the pending claims.

The application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, and a notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



William D. Blackman
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 32,397
(248) 344-4422

Customer No. 21828
Carrier, Blackman & Associates, P.C.
24101 Novi Road, Suite 100
Novi, Michigan 48375
October 24, 2007

CERTIFICATE OF ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being electronically transmitted, via EFS-Web, to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, on October 24, 2007.

